

LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE: AN AUTHENTIC MATERIAL TO TEACH ENGLISH TO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstrak

Lansekap linguistic (LL) telah digunakan sebagai bahan pembelajaran dan pemelajaran Bahasa Inggris di beberapa kota seperti Calgary-Canada, Oaxaca-Mexico, Seoul-Korea, dan Taipei-Taiwan. Hal tersebut dikarenakan fungsi informatif dan simbolik dari LL. Dari LL sebuah area dapat dipelajari penggunaan Bahasa Inggris secara deskriptif dan preskriptif. Selain itu, dari LL dapat 'dibaca' hubungan antara kekuasaan dan bahasa dan isu-isu menarik lainnya. Sejauh pengetahuan penulis, LL belum lazim digunakan di dalam konteks pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris di Indonesia. Karena itu, penulis berinisiatif menjadikan LL dalam perspektif pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris sebagai tema kegiatan pengabdian kepada masyarakat (PkM) bagi guru-guru Bahasa Inggris tingkat SMP, SMU dan SMK di Provinsi Banten yang diadakan pada 25 Juli 2018 di Universitas Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin, Serang, Banten. Pada kegiatan PkM tersebut penulis mendeskripsikan cara penggunaan LL sebagai materi otentik untuk pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris seperti yang telah dilakukan oleh para guru, peneliti dan ahli bahasa di beberapa negara di atas. Penulis juga mengungkapkan pengalamannya sendiri menggunakan LL sebagai bahan pemelajaran bahasa Inggris. Hampir semua peserta baru mengetahui terminologi LL dan tertarik untuk menggunakan LL sebagai bagian dari bahan pembelajaran bahasa Inggris.

Kata Kunci: autentisitas, lansekap linguistik, pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, pengabdian kepada masyarakat

INTRODUCTION

Within the framework of English language teaching and learning (henceforth ELT/ELL), authentic materials are said to be as equally important as non-authentic materials (Clavel-Aroitia & Fuster-Márquez, 2014). The definition of authenticity in is closely related to the word definition. Oxford Learner's Dictionaries (2018) provides three definitions of authenticity: (1) known to be real and genuine and not a copy, (2) true and accurate, (3) made to be exactly the same as the original.

As Buendgens-Kosten (2014, p.457) points out, authenticity in ELT/ELL refers to "...the notions of 'realness' or 'trueness to origin' . . ." which exemplifies in texts that are created by English native speakers. Consequently, the notion of authenticity covers all who speak and use English as their first language from children to elders, from professionals to non-professionals, from laymen to authorities; shortly those who acquire English as their first language, are grown up and grow old using English as their official and non-official language. To put it another way, authentic materials are not purposively

and specifically made for English language learning (Polio, 2014).

The above definition, however, is not the only one definition of authenticity. In fact, after reviewing literature on authenticity in foreign language learning, Gilmore (2007, p. 98) pointed out at least eight items that are connected to the notion. The writer will discuss only three that are closely connected to ELT/ELL. The first definition of authenticity refers to "... the language produced by native speakers for native speakers in a particular language community . . .". Examples may include sermons given by a priest in a church, commentaries given by commentators of a soccer game in a live soccer match, exchanged written chats in a Whatsapp group of seven graders, or a live interview of a pop star for a radio listeners (including fans of the star). The second signifies "... the interaction between students and teachers. . ."; the third is "... the social situation of the classroom . . ."; the fourth is "... assessment . . .". Those three definitions seem to be the opposite to the first definition and at the same time admits the ELT/ELL process in the classroom is considered authentic. Finally, authenticity reflects "...

the ability to behave or think like a target language group . . ." which is not only about language but also behavior of the language speakers whose language is currently being learned.

For the purpose of the article, the writer believes that authenticity is concerning the language spoken or written by the native speakers, the text of which is not created for language learning. Thus, authentic materials are said to present features that non-authentic texts lack of, e.g. colloquial expressions, pragmatic aspects, and grammatical complexity. Those texts are believed to provide better quality than inauthentic texts because they present a variety of language aspects that are used in real contexts, not made-up contexts for the purpose of learning English only (Polio, 2014). The same reasons may apply to the employment of speakers whose first language is English to be English teachers. They are considered sources of accurate and original English, regardless of their educational background.

List of authentic materials can be very long. Printed objects such as newspaper and magazine articles, novels, food and drink packages, medicine leaflets, electronic devices manuals are just few examples. Other examples are audio-visual items including films in cinemas and Youtube channels, various tutorials in Youtube, online newspapers and magazines, personal and organizational blogs, TV news broadcasts, talk shows, and reality shows. Still, other instances include radio broadcasts, songs, talk-shows, novels, poems and humors. Finally, signs in public areas can also be included as sources of authentic materials, as they present both prescriptive and descriptive use of languages including English. A collection of public signs in an urban area is known as linguistic landscape (henceforth, LL), which has become an independent field of interdisciplinary (Sociology, Language, Politics, Economics and Psychology) study (Coulmas, 2003) because LL has been used as contestation of identities.

The study of LL was first initiated by Landry and Bourhis (1997). They note that LL is "the visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs in a given territory or region" (Landry & Bourhis, 1997, p. 23). Another definition of LL is " . . . a collection of signs with texts . . . inside urban areas . . ." (Gorter, 2006, p. 83). Readers can read both the informative and symbolic functions of LL. The informative functions means that LL provides literal information to the audience, e.g. literal

message written in the sign, what language is displayed or who the sign creators are.

Meanwhile the symbolic function indicates that the message symbolized by the choice of words, color, font, size, images, language and many others. For an example of LL see Picture 1.



Picture 1.

LL of Legian Street, Denpasar, Bali
(source: <https://www.jejakpiknik.com>)

Because of the richness of information one get from LL, it has been used as authentic materials of English language teaching by Burwell and Lenters (2015), Chern and Dooley (2014), Chestnut, Lee, and Schulte (2012) and Sayer (2010). Despite the practical use of LL for ELT/ELL and for interdisciplinary learning and the fact that there are a lot of public signs that use English in big cities all over Indonesia, there has been scarce community services that have focused on using LL for ELT/ELL in Indonesia. The writer thought that it was time to introduce LL as part of the ELT/ELL authentic materials to English teachers in Indonesia. As a matter of fact, the writer has used this theme as part of her teaching materials of a subject called Approaches to English Language Learning for her graduate students since last year.

METHODS OF DELIVERY

The community service was manifested in a workshop entitled "Using Linguistic Landscape for Teaching English to High School Students." As many as forty one English teachers of junior, senior and vocational schools of Banten Province, West Java joined the workshop. The event, which was part of the cooperation between the Department of Applied

English Linguistics-Faculty of Education and Language-Atma Jaya Catholic University and the English Language Tadris-Faculty of Tarbiyah and Education-Islamic State University of Sultan Maulana Hasanudin, was held in April 11, 2018 in the auditorium of the Islamic State University of Sultan Maulana Hasanudin, Serang, Banten. The workshop was divided into three sessions: talk, question and answer and collaborative work.

The purpose of the workshop was to update the audience's knowledge on current issues in ELT/ELL material. LL is one of the current method that teacher may consider using for their students. Exposing students to the English language taught in classrooms as well as that outside the classrooms will broaden students' knowledge on whether or not the language follows the rule, the purpose of using English or what English means when it is used in public areas. At the same time, the participants can add LL to their collection of authentic ELT materials. Furthermore, they obtain updated information on the recent issues in ELT/ELL research. It is expected that the updates can encourage the participants to renew their ELT materials as well as support their students to learn English outside the classrooms. For the author, the workshop implemented the integration between her research, teaching and community service.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section does not consist of presentation and interpretation of data as in conventionalized research article. Rather, this part describes the explanation that the writer gave to the workshop participants with regard to the theme (see Picture 2). Brief explanations on how teachers and linguists have used LL for teaching English in several countries will be presented here. For the purpose of this article, the writer adds the work of Burwell & Lenters (2015). Furthermore, the writer will explain both the informative and symbolic functions of public signs in Jakarta based on her research that have been published in one reputable international journal and two national accredited journals. She will also provide an overview of her student's experience writing her undergraduate thesis under LL and a brief idea of using LL to enhance students' reading skills.

The explanation about using LL as an authentic material to teach English to high school students

The writer started the workshop by asking the participants whether or not they have heard about LL before. Almost all of the participants have not heard the term. The writer then continued by briefly explaining the definitions of LL and showing several

examples of LL in several cities in Indonesia. Afterwards, the writer described the use of LL for teaching and learning English in several countries. A number of teachers, researchers and/or linguists have used LL as part of their English teaching materials outside the classroom. Sayer (2010) studied the meanings of English signs in Oaxaca, Mexico.



Picture 2.

Workshop on the use of LL to teach English-UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanudin Serang, Banten

Having collected and analyzed two hundred and fifty public signs in which English was used, he found that the use of English there was not necessarily related to the target readers' English literacy. English was frequently used not because the targeted readers speak English, rather the language was associated with high technology, trend and style, attractiveness and love, among others. Because of the many things represented in public signs, he proposed that teachers can ask students to study English through LL. Some of the activities he suggested including imitating the project he did, collecting the English words that are written on objects at home, e.g. electronic devices, on mobile signs such as their own or others' T-shirts and bags, and on a variety of public signs they can find in their city. Collecting the English words is only the first step, which is followed by either individual or group discussion concerning the following issues: possible reasons of using English in those objects, any deviant or play with English words, any evidence proving that English has been part of the students' native language. The activities are believed to give students a critical way of viewing the function of language as a means of conveying explicit and implicit messages, a method of learning not only prescriptive but also descriptive use of English and a mode of knowing and understanding their environment.

Using different method, Chesnut, Lee, and Schulte (2012) worked with their undergraduate students to

investigate what the students learned from LL of three areas in Seoul, Korea. The three researchers adopted a narrative analysis to generate their students' experiences and interpretation of the public signs they collected. Different from Sayer's (2010) study who collected signs in which English was present, the three researchers asked their students to collect not only signs in English, but also in other languages because they had to classify the signs based on the language(s) used and the meanings revealed by the signs. One student concluded that in the areas she studied the collected signs which were written in Korean disclosed two meanings, i.e. explicit and implicit meanings. The former is exemplified in signs that use food name to represent a place selling that food, while the latter use words that have different senses or meanings from that of the place. The use of the two kinds of signs was related to the spatial matter; the former was more common in a place inhabited by senior citizens. Led by one of the three researcher, the other two students discussed signs in one area that had signs in many languages, e.g. Korean, English, Arabic, and Russian. They discussed the function of those languages in the signs of that particular area.

One of the three students also informed that from the LL research they realized that the meaning or message of one sign in one language could be decoded differently by different readers. The elucidation depended largely to several aspects including the readers previous experiences, linguistic and general knowledge, culture, and beliefs. The other student admitted that she first took it for granted that she knew what a public sign meant only by reading the words. However, the LL project that she just did showed that the choice of language or languages in one sign involved not only practical but also philosophical motives. The three students agreed that the LL analysis would be beneficial for learning translating and interpreting in English.

Focusing more on learning alphabets, Chern and Dooley (2014) discussed how 'English literacy walk' they did in Taipei, Taiwan was beneficial not only for developing critical reading in English classrooms but also in other subjects. They proposed several literacy activities in which teachers use LL as a means of guiding students to learn reading and understanding the texts in their native languages, e.g. Mandarin Chinese or Taiwanese as well as in foreign languages, e.g. English, French, Spanish, Italian. Thus, from the LL of Taiwan teacher can guide students to read and understand English words and their denotative and connotative meanings; to involve

themselves in contextual events related to the texts they read; to interpret the texts they read from their as well as others' points of views. The two researchers suggested that the 'English literacy walk' is done in stages that cover pre-task (where teacher can give a preview of a variety of signs), main task (where teacher and students take pictures of the signs) and post task (where teacher ask students to make classification based of the signs they have collected which can be based on the language(s) used). Teacher can also direct students to focus on the alphabets and types of fonts and font color used to learn reading the Roman script. Furthermore, teacher can ask students to learn implicit (pragmatic) meaning of the signs, e.g. predicting who the signs are for and why they are written in one language and not the other language.

Burwell and Lanter (2015) created and carried out a project called "Word on the Street." The one-month project involved four Humanities teachers and Grade 10 Humanities students of one school in Calgary, Alberta, Canada in which they had to uncover the identity of the LL of Brockton by analyzing the language, texts and signs that were present under the inquiry-based approach. The researchers prepared five steps of the project with the students which include linking the concepts of LL and multilingual teaching (including introducing students to what LL is), drawing map of the target area, doing the project, guiding students during the project and observing students' discoveries presentation. The teachers admitted that student can learn about various subjects and languages from one LL. More than that, students can also reflect their position in the place they live: whether or not they are part of the place. Several students told that the project was fun because they had a chance to know their environment and how exciting that was for them. More interestingly, they found that the image of Brockton that they heard or knew was different from the image created by the signs they photographed. With regard to the research question posed above, students discovered the multiple meanings of signs in the LL of Brockton depending on who read the signs and the multilingual signs that were present to serve multilingual communities there.

The writer also described her own studies about billboards ads in Jakarta that can be used as authentic teaching aids. Her description started from research on billboard in Jakarta from 2012 until 2013 where she collected a hundred and fourteen billboards that used English (Da Silva, 2014). She found that there were more billboards that used English (specifically

for brands or names of goods advertised, taglines and product information). She also pointed out that those billboards were mostly advertised non-basic needs businesses, e.g. beauty parlors, gyms, restaurants, banks and high-tech products. However, she also discovered code-switching and some English idiosyncrasies. Regardless of the idiosyncrasies, the interviews with four copy writers revealed that English was preferable because of the company policy and the positive impressions of English. The writer showed to the workshop participants that students can learn the way Indonesian speakers use English (accurate or not accurate) and the economic motives behind the use of English.

Explaining her next research, the writer showed to the participants how they could guide students to read the hidden meanings of a billboard ads from Semiotic point of view. The writer described that the use of English for a ready-to-drink bottled tea was a way to attract young customers as well as associating the product with the good connotation of English (Da Silva, 2017a). Besides 'reading' the English words, the writer explained that teachers can direct students to 'read' the impression of particular colors give to the readers. In addition, teachers can show that position of words in an ads (center, top left or right, bottom left or right) as well as the color and size of the fonts are designed to convey particular messages to the readers. Analyzing ads using semiotic approach will help students read ads and other texts critically.

Next, the writer described that readers can read English words that are used in fortyseven non-commercial signs she collected in Jakarta such as directions, warnings, and announcements although the primary language is Indonesian (Da Silva, 2017b). The reason of using the English words on those signs was related to the absence of some words in Indonesian language, efficiency and prestige of English. The borrowed words are so frequent that a Constellation of English words in Indonesian contexts was proposed by the writer to illustrate the classification of those words. Clearly, the writer's explanation also proved that LL of Jakarta (and other cities in Indonesia, including those in West Java) provides rich sources of English language learning.

Following the writer's explanation, the workshop participants were asked to do several exercises in groups (see Picture 3). However, because of the time limit, the result of the individual work could not be discussed on the same day. A group project was also assigned to the participants, in which they had to desing a project for learning English in the street for their stduents. In the project they had to state the objective, instruction and assessment rubric. The

participants could do the project outside the classroom and send their work to the writer's email address. Most participants admitted that LL was new to them and that they might use it as an alternative teaching material.

Interviews to a student using LL as her undergraduate thesis topic and a short proposal of using LL to learn reading skills

INDIVIDUAL PROJECT



Picture 3.

Individual Project for the Workshop Participants

The writer would also like to share one experience about how her research in LL inspired one of her undergraduate student-research assistant to writer her undergraduate thesis about LL. In 2013 the writer recruited some of her undergraduate students to be her preliminary dissertation research assistants. The topic of her research was the LL of Jakarta. After gathering the assistants, the writer clearly explained what LL was to them along with criteria of signs. The writer gave two to three weeks to the students to photograph signs in several areas in Jakarta. After collecting the photos, they shared them to the writer. They were not asked to discuss the photos, but only to share some problems they had when taking pictures.

One of the students, Fransdiani (2015), was eager to investigate the use of English in public signs after assisting the writer. She then developed her interest into a research design for her undergraduate thesis, focusing on the variety of English in public signs in Jakarta. She told the writer in a series of interviews that she learned a lot about how the view of the English words produced by non-native English speakers has changed, from seeing incorrect English words as errors to variant of English which cannot be naively judged as right or wrong (Fransdiani, 2016; Fransdiani, 2017). She also shared how she developed her reading ability when she was

struggling understanding the theories she could use to support her findings. In addition, she mentioned that public signs can be used for English teaching aids for students so that they know how English is used outside the classroom. However, she highlights that the teacher should help the students read the signs critically.

In this article the writer would propose that teachers choose one or several activities that have been described in the workshop and carry them out outside their classrooms. Teacher can start the entire project by a detailed explanation of what LL is and what they can see from LL of one area. Next teacher can inform and help determine which areas that should be selected, i.e. public and commercial areas such as main road, shopping street, train station, airport, and tourist resort. An area that represents ethnic diversity or homogeneity can be selected, too. Then, teacher can assign students to work in groups and take pictures of signs that use English in the area selected. Later, students may select which signs they will analyse in terms of the explicit and implicit meanings. Teacher needs to create a rubric to guide students do the project and inform that before the project begins.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Clearly, LL can be used as one authentic teaching material to teach not only English but also other issues such as economic, social and politic in the framework of interdisciplinary learning. Students can learn the English grammar as well as reading skills which involve understanding both the literal and figurative meanings of public signs. Students can learn that one sign may be interpreted differently by different readers according to their cultural, social and linguistic backgrounds. Moreover, students can learn about the interplay between words, colors, images, fonts and choice of language to deliver particular messages to the audience. The critical reading ability is expected to help them critically read other texts they receive as well as their environment. The writer notes several suggestions from the participants in relation to her workshop. First, she should add more interactions with the participants for the coming workshops. Second, materials presented can be elaborated to the origin of the term LL and/or the localized English that occur in LL, English idiosyncrasies in LL or critical reading of advertisements in LL. Third, to evaluate how far the participants can understand the workshop, they can be given pre and post-tests regarding the theme.

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